Nanking Cherry
**Nanking Cherry**

*Prunus tomentosa*

**General Description**
A winter hardy, moderately fast-growing, short-lived shrub native to China, Japan, and the Himalayas. A broad spreading, densely twiggy shrub, becoming more open and picturesque with age. Also called Manchu cherry. Edible fruits are dark red and excellent for pies and jellies.

**Leaves and Buds**
Bud Arrangement - Alternate.
Bud Color - Brown.
Bud Size - 1/8 inch.
Leaf Type and Shape - Simple, elliptical.
Leaf Margins - Unequally serrate.
Leaf Surface - Rough-veined, pubescent.
Leaf Length - 2 to 3 inches.
Leaf Width - 1 to 1½ inches.
Leaf Color - Medium to dark green above; white hairs below; yellow fall color.

**Flowers and Fruits**
Flower Type - Small but numerous.
Flower Color - Pink in bud, becoming near white.
Fruit Type - Cherry-shaped drupe.
Fruit Color - Dark red.

**Form**
Growth Habit - Upright, semi-spreading, and densely twiggy.
Texture - Medium-fine, summer; fine, winter.
Crown Height - 6 to 10 feet.
Crown Width - 6 to 10 feet.
Bark Color - Shiny brown and exfoliating when mature.
Root System - Medium in depth and spread.

**Environmental Requirements**

**Soils**
Soil Texture - Prefers loamy soils.
Soil pH - 5.0 to 7.5.
Windbreak Suitability Group - 1, 3, 4, 4C, 5.

**Cold Hardiness**
USDA Zone 2.

**Water**
Tolerates considerable wind and dryness.

**Light**
Full sun only.

**Uses**

**Conservation/Windbreaks**
Medium shrub for farmstead windbreaks.

**Wildlife**
Fruit is relished by many songbirds. Nesting cover for a few species of songbirds. Browsed by rabbits, mice, and deer, which could cause serious injury if control measures are not taken.

**Agroforestry Products**
Food - Fruits processed into wine, syrup, jellies and pies.
Medicinal - Some *Prunus* species have been used as an astringent, for coughs, bronchial problems; an antibiotic, in cancer research, and for gout.

**Urban/Recreational**
Used for screen, hedge, border and specimen plantings. It is often a rather short-lived plant.

**Cultivated Varieties**
White Nanking Cherry (*Prunus tomentosa ‘Leucocarpa’*) - White fruits.

**Related Species**
American Plum (*Prunus americana*)
Chokecherry (*P. virginiana*)
Mongolian Cherry (*P. fruticosa*)
Western Sandcherry (*P. besseyi*)

**Pests**
Common diseases include branch cankers. Extracts of various *Prunus* species are toxic to insect pests.